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ABSTRACT

Deepening disaffection with public schools has inspired flight to private schools, home schooling, and charter schools. At present, there are about 1,700 charter schools, with total enrollments estimated to reach one million soon. This book looks at six strikingly different charter schools, including an evangelical home-schooling charter in California, a teacher cooperative in rural Minnesota, and a back-to-basics charter in a largely black and poor neighborhood in Lansing, Michigan. Context is set in the introduction, "Growing Charter Schools, Decentering the State," by Bruce Fuller. Eight chapters follow: (1) "The Public Square, Big or Small? Charter Schools in Political Context" (Bruce Fuller); (2) "We Hold on to Our Kids, We Hold on Tight: Tandem Charters in Michigan" (Patty Yancey); (3) "An Empowering Spirit Is Not Enough: A Latino Charter School Struggles over Leadership" (Edward Wexler and Luis A. Huerta); (4) "Selling Air: New England Parents Spark a New Revolution" (Kate Zernike); (5) "Diversity and Inequality: Montera Charter High School" (Amy Stuart Wells, Jennifer Jellison Holme, and Ash Vasudeva); (6) "Losing Public Accountability: A Home Schooling Charter" (Luis A. Huerta); (7) "Teachers as Communitarians: A Charter School Cooperative in Minnesota" (Eric Rofes); and (8) "Breaking Away or Pulling Together? Making Decentralization Work" (Bruce Fuller). (RT)

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